



NEWS RELEASE

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THIRTEEN ARRESTED IN MAJOR DRUG STING

HUNTSVILLE, AL - U.S. Attorney Alice H. Martin, Greg Borland, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the Huntsville/Madison County High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area-Program (HIDTA) announce the arrest of thirteen individuals in connection with a drug sting which took place on Friday, May 15, 2008 in Morgan and Lawrence Counties, including Decatur and Hillsboro, Alabama. All individuals are currently in the custody of the United States Marshals.

The individuals arrested were as follows: Reco Rontaza Willingham from Hillsboro, Alabama; Galdino Zamora from Decatur, Alabama; George Deshawn Smith from Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Carlos Fernando Bernal from Decatur, Alabama; Mario Camacho from Decatur, Alabama; Jorge Sebastian Huerta from Huntsville, Alabama; Israel Hernandez from Huntsville, Alabama; Evelyn Barnes from Tupelo, Mississippi; Martha Sanchez from Hartselle, Alabama; Tanya Carletta Harris from Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Anastacio Ayala from Tillamook, Oregon; Daniel Zavala-Salgado from Fontana, California; and Luis Martin Aguilar from Apple Valley, California.

During the arrests and the execution of 10 federal search warrants, there were approximately 20 kilograms of cocaine, 85 pounds of marijuana, approximately \$200,000.00 in currency, numerous firearms, and at least eighteen vehicles seized.

"This was a joint state, local and federal operation headed by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration which was jointly worked with the Huntsville/Madison County HIDTA - High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area-Program" stated U.S. Attorney Alice H. Martin. "This is a substantial drug bust and we commend all the partners in this effort for their perseverance in fighting to keep these illegal drugs off our streets."

"The success of this complex investigation is a testimony to the outstanding working relationship between the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Madison-Morgan County HIDTA Task Force, the Huntsville Police Department, the Decatur Police Department, the Morgan County Sheriffs Department Drug Task Force, the Lauderdale County Drug Task Force, the Lawrence County Sheriffs Department, the Colbert County Drug Task Force," stated Greg Borland, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Agency. Borland went on to say, "By combining forces, they have managed to completely dismantle an organization that utilized the trucking industry to smuggle more than 250 kilograms of cocaine and thousands of pounds of marijuana from Mexico to Northern Alabama, and to smuggle millions of dollars in bulk currency back to Mexico. Clearly, these arrests and seizures will significantly affect the availability of drugs in the area."

There are approximately 340 identified international, national, and regional drug trafficking organizations operating within the Gulf Coast HIDTA. The mission of the Gulf Coast HIDTA is to measurably reduce the impact of Gulf Coast drug trafficking on other parts of the United States and to measurably reduce violent drug trafficking in its immediate three-state area. The Alabama Operations Center of HIDTA is comprised of a Major Investigations Team (MIT) that targets major drug trafficking organizations operating in the Montgomery, AL area and a Mobile Deployment Team (MDT) capable of addressing drug trafficking distribution organizations that impact specific neighborhoods. The center houses the offices of the Alabama Director of Operations and a program analyst who oversee the administration of Gulf Coast HIDTA elements within the State of Alabama.

All individuals had initial appearances in Federal Court on May 19, 2008 and will have detention hearings on Thursday, May 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. before Magistrate Judge Harwell G. Davis in Birmingham, Alabama.

The investigation of this case was conducted by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Huntsville/Madison County High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area-Program (HIDTA), Morgan County Sheriff's Department Narcotics Unit, Decatur Police Department, U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Lawrence County Drug Task Force, Lauderdale County Drug Task Force, Colbert County Drug Task Force, and Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control Board as well as other law enforcement officers.

The case is being prosecuted by Russell Penfield, Assistant United States Attorney, on behalf of the government.

Members of the public are reminded that a Criminal Complaint contains only charges. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.